

ABSTRACT

THESIS: Columbus, Indiana: Eero Saarinen's Legacy

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The American Institute of Architects ranks Columbus, Indiana, a small city of 44,000 people, sixth among American cities for the quality of its architectural design and innovation. The community's total of over 70 excellent modern and post-modern buildings are a result of highly ambitious public and private patronage of design excellence. However, no document explains how just a few individuals were responsible for this extraordinary achievement. This graduate thesis will focus on those individuals. In addition to documenting the involvement of J. Irwin Miller, an industrialist known for his local and national leadership, this thesis will explore the critical, yet often uncredited, role that Eero Saarinen, one of the nation's most distinguished architects, played in this achievement.